

Jack, You're Scared

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Category: How to Train Your Dragon, Rise of the Guardians

Genre: Adventure, Romance

Language: English

Characters: Hiccup, Jack Frost, Pitch

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2013-05-09 15:30:03

Updated: 2013-05-25 19:57:38

Packaged: 2016-04-26 14:03:49

Rating: T

Chapters: 3

Words: 19,897

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Pitch has decided on a new strategy to ensure his revenge on the Guardians, and one in particular. Having lost his staff and bearing a curse that grows stronger whenever he is afraid, Jack has to rely on Hiccup and Toothless for help. Their search for a cure earns them new friends; but the Boogeyman never rests- although, is that even their biggest problem? HiJack, Big Four

1. Knight In Frosty Armor

****Guys this HiJack ship I don't even TT^TT ****

****A little note: you can find useful and utterly useless background info at the bottom A/N. I usually write stuff there, starting from important background info to teasing foreshadowing and ending with batshit insane author rambles. In that order of importance. There are a few things that are slightly crucial to know if you want a good idea of the universe and stuff.****

****Anyway I don't own these characters, I just 'borrowed' them for selfish purposes such as angstwriting and squeeing instead.
>ALSO: I am not a native speaker of the wonderful English language, thus all of your grammar complaints are magically invalid. Yay lame internet excuses 8D**

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><p>This could safely be classified as an emergency. Sure, Hiccup was â€"had been- used to bloodthirsty creatures wreaking havoc in Berk, but this was a slightly different situation. This time, their attackers weren't dragons.
>I think I prefer dragons, though. At least the grown-ups could see those.

"Would you mind explaining what exactly these things are?" he shouted, trying to avoid the hellish creatures that air-galloped

after him and Toothless.

>"It's Pitch!" Jack answered just as loudly, freezing several monsters at once. "Those things are Nightmares! His servants!" He tightened his grip on Hiccup's shoulder, using his free arm to blast away any enemies that came up from behind them. Best heroic battle position ever.

"Pitch? Pitch Black? The Boogeyman that was supposed to never-ever-ever-ever come back again because you, and I quote, 'kicked his ass so hard, he'd probably have to-'"

>"Yes, Hiccup, that Pitch."

>"So, about that whole never-ever-ever-ever-thing-"
"DUCK!" Astrid yelled, effectively shutting Hiccup's sassy trap while warning them for the particularly big death-and-crying-children-Nightmare that lunged at them.

>Hiccup quickly steered Toothless into a free fall, and couldn't suppress a small cry of victory as their attacker flew right into the mountain behind them. Toothless joined him with a victorious roar, and Hiccup waited for Jack to compliment this state-of-the-art pilot-trick.<p>

The author chooses not to repeat what Jack had to say about Hiccup's daring maneuver, but finds it sufficient to say instead that it wasn't a compliment.

"Could you at least warn me before you do that?" Jack still looked a tad bit disoriented after he had stopped clinging to Hiccup's arm. "I thought I was going to fall to my untimely death for a second! And I can FLY! I'm IMMORTAL, for crying out loud!"

>"Before you have your near-death existential crisis, could you tell me why Pitch is in Berk, of all places?"
"How should I know why he's here?"

>"Oh, I don't know, maybe because you, and I quote, 'kicked his-'"
"THIS REALLY ISN'T THE TIME, HICCUP" Astrid interrupted him once again. She was right. The nightmares grew bigger and much more vicious. Luckily, their goal didn't seem to be mass murder or mass destruction. Less luckily, their goal did seem to be Team HiJackLess, as Hiccup had quickly dubbed their dynamic trio. Yes, he was still working on the name.

>"We need to lure them away from the village!" Hiccup shouted, turning his gaze to the sea and the islands in the distance. They'd have to figure out a counter-attack, but they needed to reach neutral grounds first. "Astrid! I'll lead them away! You stay here and take care of what remains!"
"Will you be ok?"

>"You dare questioning my rugged Viking manliness? Don't worry, I'll be fine."
Astrid gave him an uncertain grin and flew back. Jack meanwhile howled with laughter as he blasted another Nightmare to frosty pieces. "Rugged Viking manliness? Really?"

>"Jack, I was being-"
"CAN YOU TWO JUST HURRY UP?" They simultaneously cringed at Astrid's angry shout, only relaxing once they were flying over the sea and Astrid was but a tiny dot in the distance.

>"She's scary, man."
"Don't let her hear that if you treasure your immortal life."

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><p>From the shadows, the Boogeyman chuckled as he watched the dragon and company head for one of the uninhabited islands. "It's been too long since I chased you, Jack Frost." He summoned his favourite

Nightmare. "But don't worry, I intend to make up for it- and more."<p>

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><p>"Just how many are there!" Hiccup grew frustrated when three new nightmares appeared, replacing the one Toothless had just blown to tiny little pieces.
"I have no idea, Hiccup, maybe you can count them for me?" Jack retorted, vanquishing a dozen of them with epic freeze lasers.

>"I roughly estimate that we are hopelessly outnumbered!",
"I was being rhetorical!"

>"I was being-" Apart from whatever Hiccup was being at that moment, he was also being attacked from multiple sides at once. It would not have been that bad, since he was taking the ones on the left and Jack was taking the ones on the right, but when a third beam of extremely dangerous black sand hit Toothless from behind, nearly dislocating Hiccup's carefully crafted steering wing in the process, you could say there was in fact a big problem. They spiraled downwards, and Hiccup would undoubtedly have fallen to his untimely death- had Jack not been there in time to cut him loose from the saddle.

"TOOTHLESS!" The sudden swoop-in from Jack made Hiccup lose sight of his crashing Night Fury, and he panicked.

>Jack struggled with the panicked boy in his arms, whose frantic flapping that made it unnecessarily hard for him to keep his balance in mid-air. It was as if he was trying to hold on to a dog-sized living salmon that was having a seizure. A salmon with long, skimpy limbs that actually hurt when they accidentally hit you in the face.
"Relax" he reassured, trying his best to dodge the flailing arms, "I sent a wind after him that's strong enough to carry a dozen dragons." The flailing decreased, and Jack internally sighed in relief as Hiccup settled in his hold- not ever letting go of his hoodie, though. Still, it was an improvement from the rather suffocating arms around his neck a couple of moments ago.

>"Where is he now, then?" Hiccup struggled for a bit so he could look around. His panic had been replaced with calmer, albeit intense worry.
"He's _fine, _Hic, he landed pretty softly, the trees broke his fall as well. You, on the other hand, probably would have lost your other leg, if I hadn't caught you in time."

>Hiccup rolled his eyes at the smug tone in Jack's voice.
"Yes, oh brave knight in frosty armor, you saved my life, and now I'm _swooooooning_ in your arms. Can you put me down now?"

Jack ignored him; it was way too much fun to have Hiccup nervously clinging to him. Because it looked funny on his face, NOT because of the clinging- honestly, what were you expecting? It wasn't like Jack was so thrilled because he finally had a reason to hold Hiccup close to him, oh no. He purely liked this situation because of the priceless expression on Hiccup's face. His body warmth and rather firm grasp on his clothes did not have anything to do with the satisfaction he took in this situation. Neither did the way Hiccup pressed himself even further into his chest for safety make any difference. He was the Guardian of Fun, not the Guardian of Homoerotic Subtext. Man in Moon told him so.

>What was I thinking about, again?

"Jack, I'm serious. Put. Me. Down." _That's right, adorab- I mean, comical Hiccup. _Jack smirked.

>"You know, Hiccup, you really should eat more. I've carried five-year-olds with more mass than-"
"Jack, you should probably-" Hiccup interrupted warningly.

>"-honestly, it's like I'm holding a fluffy pillow in my arms with an obnoxious mouth attached-"
"JACK-"

>"Yes, Hiccup, I'll put you down in a sec!" AGH!" Jack cried as a whip of nightmare fuel (where did those things come from all of sudden?) hit him in the back. Fortunately, they were close to the ground, and Jack merely flew into a tree after he had accidentally dropped Hiccup.
"-look behind you" Hiccup finished, a few octaves lower. He staggered back on his feet. "You know, I sometimes have the feeling your communication skills are a bit rusty. You okay?"

>"I'll live." Jack still leaned in on Hiccup for a bit as he was helped up.<p>

"Well, I'm glad to hear, Jack Frost."

>"Pitch!" Jack stumbled backwards, pulling Hiccup with him as a familiar figure emerged from the shadows.
"It sure has been a while, hasn't it, Jack?" He cocked his head a little and turned his cold gaze towards Hiccup. "Aren't you going to introduce me to your friend over there?"

>Jack quickly stepped forwards and protectively held his staff between Hiccup and the Boogeyman.
"What do you want?" he spit, small shards of ice starting to form around the tip of the staff.

>"Oh, I wouldn't know, Jack" Pitch stated, casually cleaning his nails. "I was just thinking about how you ruined everything for me, while I had given you the chance to get everything you wanted!" How you turned my very own creations against me!" How I was forced to live miserably, unseen and even less feared than before, whereas you were made a Guardian, and was believed in, even made new friends!"
"Does he have a problem with answering questions directly?" Hiccup whispered, not taking his eyes off the man in front of them. Jack only nodded, the slightest grin tugging at the corners of his mouth. Apparently, even the Boogeyman couldn't stop Hiccup from sass-mouthing.

>He wasn't surprised.<p>

"!" and I thought, why? Why should I be miserable, and you all happy" Pitch' face twisted at the last word, "why shouldn't you be miserable too, Jack? Why should you get everything you wanted?"

>"Maybe because I didn't try to turn this world into a dark hellhole filled with fear?"

>Pitch chuckled again. "And a big mouth too!" You haven't changed a bit, Frost. All the more reason why I should teach you to know your place!" Jack only laughed at the threat.
"Big words, coming from someone who got his ass handed over to him! Do you really think you can still beat me? Beat the Guardians? Boy, does your long-term memory suck." Jack's smug grin finally showed up, and Hiccup relaxed a bit, taking the grin as a sign that things weren't as bad as they seemed.

>"I suppose you're right" Pitch replied, pretending to be in deep thought. "Taking on four Guardians at once was a mistake I will not make again. Instead" a devilish gleam seemed to engulf him as he smiled, "I will focus on the weakest link."
"Jack, my evil-plotting-senses are tingling" Hiccup said, backing away for a bit. He didn't like this whole new aura that practically screamed 'EVIL' in grotesque capitals in neon letters the size of a Deadly

Nadder that surrounded the shadowy creeper.

>"No worries Hic, I can easily take him" Jack reassured him. "I've grown only stronger since I became a Guardian, and he" he gestured condescendingly towards Pitch "has only grown weaker since. He can't hurt us."
"Right once again!" Pitch answered, clapping his hands mockingly. "I'm just a mere remnant of darker times, I couldn't possibly hurt THE Jack Frost." He faked a humble bow. When he lifted his face again, Hiccup felt himself shrink a little under the terrifying grin and bared teeth that were flashed at him.

>"However, I might just be able to hurt something elseâ€¦" He snapped his finger.
Suddenly, a ferocious cry echoed through the woods, one that immediately set off all the remaining alarm bells in Hiccups head.

>"TOOTHLESS!" Without thinking, Hiccup immediately went after the sound. Not Toothless. By all the Norse gods and the residents of the Walhalla, not Toothless. If any of the stories Jack had told him were true, Thor-knows-what could be happening to his best friend; that just now had been a cry of despair, no doubt.

"HICCUP! WAIT!" Jack directly saw through Pitch' plan to separate them. And just like he feared, a dark mass directly rose up right before him as he tried to go after Hiccup, blocking the way and spawning rather oversized hell horses in the process.

>"And where do you think you're going, Jack? Leaving in the middle of a conversation is considered very rude, you know" Pitch' voice purred, but the Boogeyman himself was nowhere to be seen. "The dragon can't find its master, and the master can't find his dragon, both are worried sickâ€¦ Please, let me feast on that delicious fear a little longer."
"You leave them alone, Pitch!" Jack snapped, firing freeze lasers at random, hoping to hit his opponent, hoping to get rid of the shadows that made it impossible to navigate through the forest.

>"Oh, but it'd be such a wasteâ€¦ They're so worried, Jack, I'm getting stronger and stronger each secondâ€¦ Not to mention" the voice in the shadows laughed, "you're even more worried about the two of them; it's like I'm being at a spa here, really. So much power I'm gaining at once!"
"I said leave them ALONE!" Jack fired a particularly big chunk of ice into the black walls, using the temporary opening to escape the sandy prison. He flew up, above the trees, scanning for any signs of Hiccup or Toothless. Even up in the sky he could hear Pitch' mocking laugh.

>"Let's play a little hide and seek, shall we?" Right after that, Jack could hear another cry from Toothless. It sounded like it came from the west; but as soon as Jack headed in that direction, another cry startled him even more.<p>

Hiccup. From the east. In pain.

This just couldn't be happening.

>Everything had been so wonderful lately. Finally, Jack had found someone who was around his (mental) age, who could still see him, who wasn't afraid of him, who turned out to be one of the best mortal friends Jack had ever had (not that he had had many, but still) and now, this was happening. Probably because he was one of the best mortal friends Jack had ever had.

"Having trouble with your directions, Frost?" With an angry growl, Jack waved his staff towards wherever the voice had seemed to come from. Pitch only laughed in return. "Do you really have the time to

get mad at me, I wonder?"

>"Where are they, Pitch? You tell me right now, or-"
"Jack, that would be cheating, and I want to have a fair game of hide-and-seek. So just shut it, and seek!" The laughter died away, and so did the remaining dark sand that had followed Jack. It was suddenly quiet.

>Too quiet. The entire forest was still, as if time itself had stopped. There wasn't a single sound; not the chirping of birds, not the scurrying of small animals, there weren't even any rustling leaves. Jack looked around anxiously, internally begging for this eerie silence to be broken, his senses sharpened to their maximum.
'_Stay calm'_ he told himself, '_panic will only make him stronger. Stay calm._'

>He decided to go east, to where Hiccup's cry had come from. Toothless was a Night Fury, the fastest and most dangerous dragon alive- he could handle himself for a while. Probably.
Hiccup, on the other hand, was about as dangerous as a fluffy chicken. Sure, the boy was intelligent and adaptable, and unexpectedly brave if he needed to be, but his physical power and abilities in close combat wereâ€| limited. At best. _And don't get me started on his clumsiness. He's probably knocking himself unconscious with that iron hoof of his as we speak._

"HICCUP!" Jack knew how much it must have delighted Pitch to hear him scream like this, and it sickened him, but there had to be priorities. "HICCUP! WHERE ARE YOU!"

>"JACK!" It sounded faintly, but it seemed to come from the south this time. The winter spirit didn't waste any time and shot off, still calling out for Hiccup.
"JACK!" It suddenly came from the opposite direction, and even fainter than before. Jack quickly turned another 180 degrees, but had barely taken off again when Hiccup's voice cried out again- from the west.

>This wasn't going to work. Pitch was playing a trick on his mind or something. He needed to rely on something else than his ears.
Jack closed his eyes. He had a trick of his own up his sleeve, although he had never really practiced it much- it never seemed relevant to him before.

>He concentrated on the cold, the cold that was everywhere. He could feel it, all the slight changes in temperature on the island, the freezing winds that howled above the trees, the warmer, sheltered spots at their trunks. And at last, after a couple of excruciating moments of intense concentration, two sources of heat standing out in the cold. A dragon, and a human- both at the same place.
_Thank goodness, Toothless is with him. _Jack focused on the two sources and dove towards them, urging the winds to take him there faster.

"Jack!" The voice, less faint than before, broke halfway, and was rigged with anxiety. "I'm here, Hiccup! I'm coming!" Jack shouted back, worried about Hiccups weird voice. The answer that came was loud and clear- Jack almost wished he hadn't heard it.

>"DON'T!" Hiccup sounded even more frantic than before. "JACK, LISTEN TO ME! DON'T COME! STAY THERE! STAY AWAY, JACK!"
Jack sped up even more. Screw those words, there was obviously something wrong. If anything, they were an incentive to get to Hiccup even sooner.

>He landed in a seemingly tranquil forest clearing, a gust of icy wind sweeping back the trees around him.<p>

Shit.

Jack nearly dropped his staff when the scenery in front of him unfolded. Yes, Toothless was with Hiccup, and both seemed to be unharmed. But that didn't really make up for the situation they were in.

>"I told you not to- oh, I knew it was hopeless." Hiccup struggled against the tendrils of black sand that tied him to a tree. He tried to shrug as he met Jack's horrified gaze. "I'm sorry! They just came out of nowhere!"
Toothless roared angrily, trying to shake off the countless black shackles that kept him down. Well, roared was a pretty big word, considering the fact that his mouth was also kept shut by the black sand.

>"Don't worry, Hic" Jack smiled reassuringly. "I'll-"
"And finally, our hero dashes in to save the day. You took your time, Jack" Pitch hummed, suddenly appearing next to the tree Hiccup was tied to. "It was adorable, really, how he tried to warn you. I had to mess with the message a little, but look at how much fun we had with it! Don't you just love fun, Frost?"

>Hiccup tried to move away from the Boogeyman, but to no avail. His eyes had grown wide, and they desperately tried not to look in the direction that Pitch' voice was coming from.
"Pitchâ€|" Jack growled, not taking his eyes off the shadowy figure. He slowly, threateningly raised his staff, pointing it at the King of Nightmares. "You let them go right now, orâ€|"

>"Or what? You're gonna make me some ice cream?" Pitch smiled, a menacing glimmer flickering in his eyes.
"I don't think you are fully understanding the situation here. The one who should be making threats is not you, Frost." He made a wide arm gesture, and in a blink a huge scythe formed out of black sand appeared in his hand. Before Jack could move, the blade was already held at Hiccup's throat. A small, involuntary whimper escaped the small Viking. Had the blade not been that incredibly close, he would have gulped.

>Jack in turn could not suppress a small alarmed sound either.
As for Toothless, he pretty much went batshit crazy.

>Pitch laughed.<p>

"Bit of a dÃ©jÃ vu, isn't it, Frost?" he snickered. Jack immediately remembered- the tiny, fragile Baby Tooth in Pitch' pale hand, the helplessness he had felt, the unbearable smirk of the Boogeymanâ€|

No. No, that couldn't happen here. Not again. Not with Hiccup.

>"I see you remember now. Good." That smirk. It was there again. "Because it's the same game. The staff, or dragonboy here gets it."<p>

This couldn't be happening.

"Jack, don't be stupid here" Hiccup said warningly, watching him intensely. "It's a trick. Remember what he did after you gave him the staff."

>"Oh, so he told you, didn't he?" Pitch reached out with his other hand, grasping Hiccup's chin, forcing the boy to look him in the eyes. "Did he tell you about poor little Baby Tooth?" He moved a bit closer towards him. Jack clenched his staff even tighter, but the scythe was still barely an inch away from Hiccup's throat and he didn't dare to risk it.
"Did he tell you how I kept crushing that little fairy in my hand bit by bit?" Pitch dug a nail in Hiccup's cheek. Hiccup closed his eyes, looking as if he was about to throw up.

>"Did he tell you-"
Pitch' question was rudely interrupted by a violent spit from Hiccup in his face. Cursing, he stumbled back for a

bit. Jack wanted to rush forward, but had barely moved his feet or-

>"YOU STAY THERE, FROST!" The scythe was back in its original position. Pitch quickly recomposed himself, turning his brief enraged expression into a smirk again. He laughed, but there still was a hint of irritation in his eyes.
"Ooh, he's got guts after all. I can see why you were interested in the kid, Frost. Though I must say I liked him more when he was on the verge of wetting his pants." Pitch ruffled through Hiccups hair, and then turned towards Jack again.

>"So, where were we?" The smirk grew more malicious, "Oh, that's right: the staff!"
"How do I know you won't pull the same trick on me?"

>"You don't" the Boogeyman shrugged matter-of-factly. Suddenly, he folded his hands innocently, and his expression changed into that of a mocking imitation of some saint's smile. There even appeared a little halo of black sand above his head.
"But I'm in such a merciful mood, I'm prepared to offer you a nice deal. I'll let one of the two go first, without you having to do anything, as a token of my mercy. Then, you give me the staff, and I'll let the other one go as well. Deal?"

>"He's trying to trick you, Jack, don't- mmph!" Hiccups' warning was cut off as black sand covered his mouth at an annoyed snap of Pitch' fingers.

"My kindness is not an immortal thing, Jack. Do we have a deal, or not?" Pitch stroked the blade of the scythe menacingly. Oh, it had been a long time since he had felt an atmosphere this deliciously thick with fear and worry.

>"Fine!" was the angry answer, and Pitch couldn't help but make a little internal jump of delight.
This was his lucky day. It had, of course, been a huge risk, using all of his leftover power on an all-out attack on puny little Berk, but it had been worth it. Everything had gone according to plan; the anxiety of his victims had turned out to be even been greater than he had anticipated. Now the amount of power he had regained from their fear had surpassed his biggest expectations- oh, the mighty feeling of having the upper hand, nothing could compare to it!

>On the outside he remained composed, only allowing a short chuckle of victory to escape his lips. "A wise decision, Frost. Now then, which should I let go first? The dragon, or its rider?"
Hiccup _mmmmmmph'_d anxiously and gestured with his head towards Toothless. Jack kept looking from the dragon to the boy and back again, the helplessness and doubt dripping from his features. It looked extraordinarily good on his face, Pitch noted.

Which one? Which one? Jack had accepted by now that he couldn't avoid this deal with Pitch. He wanted to hit something violently with his staff, to freeze something and then smash it to pieces, to fire a huge chunk of the most hardened ice at something- but all he could was feverishly look from Hiccup to Toothless and back again.

>Seldomly had he seen such an intense bond between a human and a non-human; such a bond was rare even between two humans. Toothless meant everything to Hiccup. Jack knew that Hiccup would never forgive him if anything would happen to the dragon.
However, Jack in turn would never forgive himself if anything happened to Hiccup. He had come to like the Toothless a lot, sure, but it had been Hiccup who had seen him. A teenage boy, a bit younger than Jack had been when he was turned into a Spirit. The first teenager who could see him and

didn't run away or went insane. The first person Jack could talk to as if they were just two friends, just two normal guys in their teens, hanging out and discussing normal things like annoying parental figures and weird friends and dragon riding and evil Boogeymen taking over the world and all those other things you just didn't discuss casually with a little child or the Tooth Fairy.

In three hundred years, Jack had never had a friend like that. And he had never met someone like Hiccup who, on top of being able to see him, turned out to be this awesome dude that combined a warm, kind personality with brains, with this genius sense of sarcastic humour, with adorable curiosity and impressive imagination
>He couldn't lose that. Hiccup was too important. He was going to hate Jack if he chose him instead of Toothless, but Jack didn't care (that much) as long as Freckles would be safe.<p>

"Well, Frost? We may be immortal, but the clock keeps ticking for distressed damsels here."

>Jack stared at his feet.
"Let Hiccup go." His words were met with the most desperate _MMMPH _yet, and Jack didn't dare to look in his friend's direction, not wanting to see the undoubtedly pained look in Hiccup's eyes. Pitch laughed.

>"Predictable as always. Fine. Have the boy."
He snapped his fingers, and immediately the black tendrils that had kept his human prisoner tied to the tree disappeared. Jack could hear Hiccup take a deep breath as the gag disappeared as well, followed by a few coughs. Still staring intensely at his feet, he waited until Hiccup had come over to his side.

He kept staring like that for three extremely long seconds, before he realized that he didn't hear any footsteps. Worried, he finally looked up.

>Hiccup was still standing at the exact same spot as before. Angrily, Jack turned his gaze to Pitch, about to ask why he didn't let him go, when Pitch raised his hands.
"Don't look at me, Frost." He waved his empty hands for a bit, then looked at the boy who still stood next to him. "I'm not doing anything. He's standing there on accord of his own free will."

>Jack lowered his staff.
"Hiccup?" he asked, confusion written all over his face. "What are you waiting for? Get over here!"

>Hiccup kept staring at his feet, as intensely as Jack had been staring at his own a few moments ago.
"I'm really sorry, Jack, but I can't leave Toothless."

>You have got to be kidding me.

>"Hiccup, don't be STUPID!" Jack shouted angrily, producing a majestic eye roll as well. Why did he have to complicate everything with such uncharacteristic stupidity? "You're only making it worse! This way you'll both-"
"I know! I'm sorry, it's justâ€¦" Hiccup kept avoiding Jack's gaze, focusing on Toothless instead. "It's with Toothless or not at all, Jack. I'm sorry. I can't leave him in his hands." He took a deep breath and reluctantly turned to Pitch.

>"Let Toothless go, I'll stay here instead."
Jack let out a short snarl of frustration. _If we ever get out of this unscathed, I will freeze one of your toes off for this, stupid son of Stoick. _

>"Well, isn't this an interesting turn of events?" Pitch laughed once more. Of course, he had studied the young Viking and his dragon long enough to expect this from the kid, but there was no need to let Jack know that.
"Well, since it's dear Hiccup's wishâ€¦ I couldn't

possibly be so heartless as to ignore it."

>"Pitch, don't-"
>"Shut it, Frost, you've had your choice already. Now Hiccup, if you were so cooperative as to stay right there?" Pitch snapped his fingers once more, and Hiccup could barely suppress a whimper as he was bound to the tree again. Simultaneously, the black shackles around Toothless disappeared. The dragon cried out angrily and spread his wings, turning towards the man that had bound him.

"You better control that lizard, Frost!" Jack knew without looking that Pitch was holding a blade against Hiccup's throat again. He flailed with his arms, trying to distract the dragon, shouting, begging him to calm down before something would happen to their friend. "STOP! Calm DOWN, Toothless!" He wanted to run over to the dragon, but he was afraid Pitch would not allow it.

>Thankfully, Toothless was intelligent enough to realize after a moment what was going on, and calmed down.
>"Toothless, come here" Jack beckoned. If he couldn't guarantee Hiccup's safety, he could at least do that for the dragon.

>"Go on, buddy, go to Jack. Listen to Jack. Come on, Toothless" Hiccup urged as well, even more anxious for him to reach the safe side of the clearing.
>Reluctantly, Toothless wandered over to Jack, not once diverting his eyes from Hiccup.

>"There's a good pet" Pitch said, as if he were talking to a dog. "Now then, order that thing to get lost. I don't like a free dragon messing around with my plans, not when everything is going so well."
>"Toothless, go home, pal." Jack sighed at the stubborn headshake he got as a response. "Don't worry, I'll make sure nothing happens to Hiccup." The dragon still shook his head.

>"Toothless, please, go away." Hiccup felt a pang in his chest when the dragon looked at him, his expression full of hurt. But he wanted Toothless to go away, even more than Pitch wanted him to. The further his friend was away from the Boogeyman, the better.
>"Go, you brainless bag of scales! Just GO!" Jack screamed, making wide, shooing gestures towards the unwilling dragon. "Don't you understand what will happen to him? GO!"

>Hiccup tuned in, shouting even harder, telling his companion to go away. Toothless cringed, confused by their shouting, hurt by their rejections, and conflicted about what to do. He understood that his best friend was in danger and that he shouldn't attack, but he didn't understand why he had to go. Wasn't he supposed to protect him? Despite his reassurances, the flying human hadn't really proven himself capable of protecting Hiccup well. Toothless didn't want to leave him in his unreliable hands.

But they kept shouting at him, and they became more commanding and mean, and even Hiccup started to sound unnaturally bossy, and they all looked so desperate, and Toothless didn't know what to do and the shouting continued and it had to stop and they were so mean now and-

>With an anguished cry, the mighty Night Fury spread his wings, and looked sadly into the eyes of his helpless friend once more. Then he took off- on his legs, since there wasn't a dragon rider to manage the steering wing.

_ 'Well, there goes our only hope of escaping' _ Jack thought, as the sounds of Toothless' rather inelegant rampage through the forest grew fainter.

>Hiccup was torn between feeling relieved that Toothless was out of harm's way, and feeling very, very concerned about Jack's

safety.
He looked at Pitch, and felt how fear quickly overshadowed his relief as the Boogeyman laughed darkly.

"Well, wasn't that a touchy scene just now" he chuckled, as he turned to face Jack again. His smirk had grown alarmingly malicious.
>"And now, Jack, the staff."<p>

_ Da-da-da, we're dead._

* * *

><p>DA-DA-DA, CLIFFHANGER. I'm a terrible human being.

The following words are ramblings of the so-called author and mostly consist of lame excuses and brainless ponderings and foreshadowing and superfluous background stuff. Read at own risk.

* * *

><p>FIRST THINGS FIRST. There are a few background-thingies that are slightly crucial to know about this story. Technical yaddayadda. It's not like it's essential information, but it'll help to get a good, full picture of what this fic is aboutwhat it is going to be about, as well as the setting.**

1._Univers__e_**: Takes place in a world where the Big Four all live at the same time. Their homelands lie far away from each other and are in different stadia of civilization and cultural development. Jack doesn't come from the future, but he does wear his hoodie because Burgess, despite not having a modern civilization, has that kind of fashion. Also because I am a huge sucker for that hoodie and I'd be damned if I couldn't twist reality into Jack wearing that hoodie NO MATTER WHAT. MWAHAHA.**

2. **_Ages_: Jack is 300 years old. Hiccup is around 16-17, otherwise it'd become a bit of an awkward shipping story. Rapunzel is 18, Merida is around 17 or so.**

3. **_Moment in timeline_s_: Some years after the big dragon battle in Berk, twelve years after the Guardians VS Pitch shizzle. As for the exact moments in Tangled and Brave: part of the plot, can't spoil it now.**

4. **_Relationships_: Jack and Hiccup are BFF's for a while now with a bit of dormant crushing underneath- this _is _a Hijack fic-to-be, after all. Apart from that, the Big Four have no idea of the others' existence.**

* * *

><p>Anyway, hope you enjoyed this. I also hope you haven't grown tired of the whole hostage situation because it's likely to take another chapter. Pitch is a nasty, playful bastard after all. **Not in a sexual way. I think. I'm not really sure whether to incorporate BlackIce or not. Pitch can be pervy enough without having actual sexual intentions.****>

**Now that we're on the topic of sexual intentions: please excuse me

for my terrible, terrible portrayal of awkward subconscious HiJack. This is my first shipping fic ever that wasn't made up during a sugar rush. I have troubles writing romance. Of course, there will be more than just awkward NO HOMO/ALL OF THE HOMO-moments, but it'll take a while.

>Oh, and by the way: there will be no Jackunzel or Merricup. I have absolutely nothing against those ships, I love pretty much every Big Four ship in its own way. I just like to keep this story focused on HiJack, and I don't want to come between Rapunzel and Eugene because honestly I love them. **

(What is the name of Rapunzel x Eugene? Rapugene? Riderpunzel? Fitzpunzel? Fryingpanshipping?)

And as for Merricup: I think it's an adorable combination and bound to give many hilarious hijinks. However, I just like HiJack more because of reasons.

**AND FINAL LAME EXCUSE: I AM SO FUCKING SORRY FOR HICCUP'S CHARACTERIZATION BUT I JUST SUCK SO MUCH AT SASSING I CAN'T HELP IT I'M SORRY. Really. I tried, but witty comebacks just aren't my forte.

>When I had gathered enough courage to actually write this down, I set five big rules for myself:

1. THOU SHALT NOT BRING SHAME UPON HICCUP'S HOLY SASS.

2. THOU SHALT NOT BRING SHAME UPON THE EPIC HIJACK BROMANCE BY RUSHING THE ROMANCE TOO MUCH.

4. THOU SHALT NOT BRING SHAME UPON TOOTHLESS BY GIVING HIM A MINOR ROLE BECAUSE TOOTHLESS IS A BIG DEAL TO HICCUP AND NOT JUST THE FUCKING PET DON'T YOU FUCKING DARE FORGET ABOUT TOOTHLESS YOU FANFICTION-WRITING PIECE OF-

__4. THOU SHALT NOT BRING SHAME UPON BOTH HICCUP'S AND JACK'S CHARACTERIZATION AND PORTRAY THEM RESPECTIVELY AS A DITZY, DEFENSELESS AND EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE UKE AND A PERVERTED, POSSESSIVE AND EMOTIONALLY UNSTABLE SEME. __

__5. THOU SHALT NOT MAKE THEM INTO CRYBABIES BECAUSE NEITHER OF THEM EVEN REALLY CRIED IN THE MOVIES AND LET'S BE HONEST HERE THEY WENT THROUGH SOME PRETTY HARSH SHIT THERE SO NO FUCKING CRYING AT EVERY POSSIBLE SETBACK. JESUS. __

__(6. IF THY EXPERIENCETH A FIT OF LAUGHTER WHILST WRITING A SCENE THAT IS MEANT SERIOUSLY, FOR THE LOVE OF FROSTCUP, DELETE IT. YES, THAT MEANS THAT THY ATTEMPTS AT WRITING SMUT ARE OFF THE TABLE. YOUR SCARCE TALENTS OBVIOUSLY LIE ELSEWHERE)___

**I'm so screwed. And talkative. God. Why is it so hard sometimes to write fics, while these ramblings just kind of flow out of my fingers into the laptop?

>I need a crash course in metaphores, STAT.

2. A Little Party-Trick

**DA DA DADADADADADA PITCH BLACK

>DA DA DADADADADADA FROSTCUP
PITCH BLACK! FROSTCUP!

>PITCH BLACK! FROSTCUP!
DRAMATIC

>DRAMATIC
DRAMATIC

>HOSTAGE! ...situation.
Yup. That's pretty much what happened the previous chapter. ****I really should stop eating so many apples.
**

Also I don't own any of these people. I wouldn't be writing this if I did. Ohohoho~

* * *

><p>Toothless had completely disappeared from sight. Hiccup shot him an apologetic glance from the other side at the clearing, tied to a tree. Pitch Black smiled at him expectantly, waiting for Jack to surrender his staff.<p>

It really wasn't Jack's day.

"Well then, Frost, time to part with your beloved twig." Jack looked at his staff, and back at Hiccup, who was shaking his head again.

>"Jack, you know it won't-"
"Can you just shut that ungodly trap for a few moments, boy?" Pitch snarled, impatience finally taking its toll on him. Within a moment, his obnoxious prisoner's mouth was covered with sand again.

>He turned towards Jack again.
"The _staff_, Jack. I don't think I can keep myself from hurting this brat for much longer now." Pitch moved his scythe even closer towards Hiccup's throat, who in turn let out a small yelp- and not just because he was scared. Jack flinched when he saw the tiniest bit of blood trickle down the dark blade.

>"Stop that!" He could punch himself when he heard the sudden rise in his voice. He hastily turned the staff upside down, holding the lower half towards the Boogeyman, just like the time with Baby Tooth- but he didn't want to think about that now. He took a slow step towards Pitch, still holding his staff upside down.<p>

"Oh, but that's not the way we're going to do it." The Boogeyman laughed at the confusion that was written all over the pale face.

>"We're going to do it a little different this time. Put it on the ground, and then get up with your hands above your head. Put it down now- slowly, Jack, slowly. One sudden movement and Hiccup will never bother humanity with his blabbering again."
Jack obeyed directly, slowly laying his trusted staff down.

>With a pained expression he let it go, raising his hands as he slowly got up again.<p>

Pitch smiled devilishly.

>"Such a good boy, Jack."
"Let him go, Pitch."

>"Oh, but we're not done yet! Now, you have to come here. Slowly.

Leave your staff over there, if you don't mind."
"_MMMMMMMPH!"

_Hiccup couldn't shake his head with the scythe practically licking at his throat, but his eyes conveyed the same message. _Don't. Don't do it, Jack. Please.

>Jack himself knew what this meant as well. For a moment, he couldn't move. Fear filled him up; he felt naked without his staff to protect him against Pitch. It was as if he was standing at the edge of a cliff: one step and he would fall into the abyss.

>But he had to. There was no choice. Shakily, he took a step towards

the King of Nightmares. He didn't dare to look back, where his staff lay on the ground. He feared that if he did, he would change his mind.
He took another step. It didn't get any easier after he made the first. Every single step was a small battle between his absolute fear of Pitch and his absolute resolve to save Hiccup. Every single step took him closer to the wretched man of shadows. He was trembling, he noticed after the third step. He felt ashamed, but he couldn't stop it.

Just after he had made the fourth step, he heard some noise behind him. Without thinking he turned around, terrified that Pitch had decided to resort to his favorite fighting technique and was about to stab him in the back. Instead, there was a small group of Nightmares, holding the staff between their jaws, together taking the staff with them into the shadows. He turned back, feeling his heart going mad inside his chest as he realized just how utterly defenseless he was now. He saw that Hiccup realized it too. His tiny chest went up and down so fast Jack had a hard time imagining just how shallow his respiration must have been.

>"It'll be alright, Hic, don't worry" he said soothingly, hardly believing his own words. He made a brave attempt at a smile. Hiccup in turn made a half-assed attempt to wink a few times, trying to tell him that it was okay, no doubt.<p>

The Boogeyman himself reveled in the fear that the two boys emitted. Each step that the snowboy took towards him seemed to increase it even more. There was fear of him, of course, but it was overpowered by that other kind of fear, not as sweet, but just as powerful: the fear that the other one would get hurt. Oh, these intense fears alone would have satisfied him, but now that it was coupled by a defeated Jack Frost, completely at his mercy, trembling with fear—
>He had stopped in front of Pitch, about two steps remaining between them.
"Alright" he said, trying his best to sound calm. "I'm here. Now let him go."

>Pitch could see the badly masked fear in Frost's eyes, and he knew that they were both thinking about the same moment, years ago; the shock and devastation in his eyes, as Pitch had simply said 'No'. Oh, how did he long to see that expression again! How badly did he want to see those blue eyes widen, as he would slit the young Viking's throat with a single move! Hopefully, the Guardian would get soaked in his blood— oh, how lovely would the dark red glisten in his white hair, on his white skin?<p>

Such a shame that he couldn't do that here.

"Now let him go."

>Hiccup held his breath as Jack said those words. He could see the intense look between the two Spirits; and he felt the tension reach a point that was disastrous for his already exasperated heart.
He felt conflicted. He was extremely relieved that Toothless wasn't in danger anymore; but together with the Night Fury, their last hope for a successful escape had disappeared. Now Jack was completely defenseless. Worse, if he could, Jack _wouldn't_ even defend himself, because of him. As for Hiccup, he could only watch and pray to all residents of Asgard for an unlikely good outcome. The tiny cut in his throat that the scythe had made stung a bit; but his guilt stung far worse.

"Now let him go." Jack used all of his willpower so his voice wouldn't crack. Pitch smiled.

>Suddenly, a growling Nightmare erupted from the shadowy trees, as if called on a inaudible command. It walked around Jack, its nostrils flaring, its entire body pouring with a desire to hurt him. Jack didn't move, holding his hands still up in the air, trying his very best not to show the fear he felt for this creature.
After the Nightmare had passed him (taking what felt as an eternity doing so) it halted in front of Hiccup, who pressed himself against the tree in a vain attempt to stay away from it.

>"Hello, my dear" Pitch cooed, letting his scythe vanish as he petted it lovingly. "Will you guard our little hostage while I'm busy?"
The beast whinnied, and positioned itself right next to Hiccup. Pitch wiggled his fingers for a bit.

>"Ah, finally, hands-free. You can drop your hands now, by the way. Oh, and just so you know" he said in an off-hand manner, "if you do anything funny, my Nightmare will bite off his head."<p>

Jack really tried not to do so, but it became sizably harder to stay still when Pitch reached for Hiccup's knife and painfully slowly took it out the sheath. Hiccup himself squirmed, but he didn't say anything- something that worried Jack deeply.

>"That's an awfully sharp blade for such a young man" Pitch said, running his fingers along the edges of the blade. Wherever his fingertips touched the steel, tiny black spots would appear for a moment, only to vanish an instant later.
"You know, they shouldn't give weapons like these to the unskilled youth" Pitch mumbled, as he held the knife close to his eye for inspection. Apparently, he liked what he saw. "They could easilyâ€¦" he trailed off for a moment. Suddenly, he placed the flat side on Hiccup's lips. The boy's eyes widened to an nearly inhuman extent, eyeing the sharp tip with sheer panic.

>"â€¦ hurt themselves by accidentâ€¦" Hiccup seemed to hold his breath, frozen in his last effort to effectively press himself into the tree.
Jack had instinctively reached out when the knife had suddenly been pointed at his friend, but an angry growl from the Nightmare held him back.

>"There now, Jack, you shouldn't suddenly move like that! You could startle me, and who knows what I'd do, if I were to be startledâ€¦" Pitch grinned wickedly, slowly withdrawing the blade. Hiccup let out a deep, shaky sigh as the steel parted with his lips. He didn't let down his guard, however, and watched worriedly as Pitch turned to Jack.
The Boogeyman took one step towards him. Jack instinctively wanted to take a step back, but the sudden rush of the Nightmare's unsightly jaws towards Hiccup's throat stopped him.

>"There's a good boy, Jack. Stay." Pitch approached him ever so slowly, the knife in his hand almost aglow from the darkness that the man emitted.
Jack couldn't really tell whether he didn't flinch because he still had guts somewhere, or because he was just frozen solid from fear. But he didn't move a muscle, not even when Pitch started to circle around him. He kept his gaze focused on Hiccup, drawing strength from the brave attempts of the young Viking to act as calm as possible.

"You know, I've longed so much for this moment to happen" Pitch whispered in his ear, halting behind him. An arm stretched out from behind Jack, brushing past his neck. He and Hiccup flinched simultaneously when they saw the knife in Pitch's pale hand, now glimmering before Jack's eyes. "I spent so much time just thinking about the things I would do to you. First, I just wanted to beat you within an ounce of your immortal life and forever keep you that way, battered, bruised, broken, you name it. But that just felt soâ€¦"

_uninventive, _you know?" Pitch whispered in Jack's other ear.
>He had laid his other hand causally on Jack's shoulder. The arm in front of Jack that was holding the knife suddenly turned. Jack momentarily stopped breathing as Pitch ever-so-slowly pointed the sharp tip at his chest, not quite piercing the hoodie, but creating a pressure right between his ribs that was terrifying enough on its own. Jack tore away his eyes from the shiny threat and focused in Hiccup again.
"It'll be ok" he mouthed, hoping to magically calm him down. Hiccup blinked back, but the fear that was written all over his freckled face didn't diminish at all.
>"What's that, Frost? Making empty promises again?" The tip of the knife pressed a bit further into the hoodie.
"_Pitch_" Jack's threat broke off after the first word and ended up as a small gasp, as suddenly he felt something cold and sharp prick him in the chest. The knife had pierced the hoodie effortlessly.
>"You should watch your tone, Jack. If you anger me, my hand just might slip" the sharp point bit into his skin "and who knows what kind of accidents could happen."
>Jack closed his eyes, trying his best not to freak out. However, there were other priorities right now.
"You got me where you wanted now. Hiccup has nothing to do with this. Let him go."
>"Oh, but Jack, his fearâ€¦ I wish you could feel it, the way he freaks out every time I do this" the knife bit into his flesh more. "He'll have first-class view."
"View of what?" The question escaped Jack's lips before he could realize that he did not want to know the answer at all. Pitch chuckled darkly behind him.
>"View of this."

A burning pain erupted from the spot where the knife had punctured his skin, as if the cold steel had been turned into a scorching hot branding iron.

>Jack cried out in pain, blindly grasping at his chest as if the burning would stop if he touched it. He kept screaming, falling to his knees, digging his fingers in the fabric of his hoodie further and further. The pain kept getting worse, alternating between feeling like flames licking at his insides and a thousand minuscule needles roughly being jammed into the tiny spot where the knife had pricked him.
He could hear Hiccup shout his name in the distance, and Pitch' condescending response that was impossible to distinguish. A heated conversation followed, but the pain blocked out every sound.

Slowly, agonizingly slowly, the pain started to fade away. Jack still lay trembling on the ground, panting heavily, clutching his chest. He slowly opened his eyes.

>"Feeling a bit better now, Frost?"
Jack staggered to his feet, determined to show Hiccup that everything was alright, and to show Pitch he hadn't won yet.

>"Whatâ€¦" he coughed violently, "what did youâ€¦?"
"Oh, that was just a little party-trick, really. Just putting up a good show for dear Hiccup. Tell me, boy, did you like it?"

The author chooses not to repeat what Hiccup had to say about it. Instead, she finds it sufficient to say that it wasn't a compliment and that she wonders where the hell Hiccup learnt that phrase.

"I'm ok, Hic. Look at me. I'm fine." Jack smiled reassuringly, gesturing as if he were calming a panicked child. Hiccup didn't seem convinced, looking at the crumpled fabric of the hoodie that Jack still held tightly. Jack quickly let go and straightened it out, and

attempted to show him another smile. "Really, the pain's gone. I'm fine." Jack patted himself on the spot where the knife had pricked him. It was true- the pain had completely disappeared by now. Jack looked at Pitch.

>The Boogeyman chuckled at the dark look. "Let me guess: you want me to release him and then crawl back into the deep pit I came from." He rubbed his chin, as if he was a rational, sensible being that was overthinking his options.
"Well, you have put up a rather entertaining show so far- I suppose that was to be expected though, from the Guardian of Fun. All right, your efforts will be rewarded."

And just like that, he disappeared from sight.

The Nightmare guarding Hiccup vanished instantly, and so did the gag. Jack had barely processed this surprising change in Pitch' attitude, when the other binds disappeared as well. Hiccup fell forward and practically stumbled into Jack- who in turn, couldn't keep his balance either, both from the shock that had taken away all the strength in his legs and because Hiccup was actually heavier this time than Jack had anticipated.

>"Oof!" Jack couldn't help but wince when he fell on the unforgiving ground, the sudden weight on top of him squeezing the oxygen out of his lungs.

>"Jack!" It sounded panicky from on his chest. Jack looked up, seeing the wild mess of brown hair that had been tickling his chin. Within a moment, two worried green eyes popped up.
"Are you ok?"

>"For the fiftieth time, I'm fine, Hic. I just had a rough landing, that's all. I'll live. How about you?"

>He felt Hiccups chest go up and down as the boy let out a sigh of relief. Then, it went up and down at a much faster pace, as a wary chuckle came from the brown mess on top of him.
"I'll live too, I guess. I seem to have landed on something soft and squishy and fat." Suddenly, Hiccup's head shot up again, as he pretended to look down in surprise, as if he saw Jack for the first time. "Oh, HiJack!""*****

>'I'll never get over it how he can still joke after this' Jack thought, feeling his admiration for his friend grow. He pushed Hiccup off, punching him playfully.

>"Shut up, Horrendous the Turd. I take everything back I said about your weight. I think I'd rather be crushed under North than under you." They laughed, finally, and Hiccup stretched out on the ground. They lay there silently for a few moments, staring up at the clear sky, trying to normalize their erratic breathing patterns, trying to process everything that had happened.<p>

"Soâ€¦ What about your staff?" Hiccup asked eventually.

>"Dunno. Pitch took it with him, I guess." Jack tried to sound as casual as possible, but his hands turned to fists nonetheless.
"Did he break-"

>"He hasn't. Trust me, I would've felt it if he had."
"Why didn't he break it, then?"

>"I don't know, Hic. I really have no idea. Nothing he does makes sense. He had us completely at his mercy. He could've done anything. He could've-" Jack didn't finish, but the rest of his words were clear to both him and Hiccup.
He could have killed you. _Not just Hiccup, either. Toothless too. Hell, he could have broken the staff, killed Hiccup and Toothless, and then he could have done anything he wanted to Jack- and there was nothing that could have stopped him. Instead, he had only tortured Jack briefly and taken the

staff. It puzzled him, but for now, they were all safe, and that was what mattered most.

"So, what are you going to do now? Without your staff?"

>"I guess I'll go to North" Jack said lazily. "The Guardians need to know Pitch is back in business again. Maybe we'll find a way to get it back. Pitch is bound to confront us again. And when he does, he'll be sorry he dared to lay a finger on you and Toothless."
"Heh. I guess I better stay away when that happens, right?" Jack noticed a small change in tone in Hiccup's voice. He looked aside. Hiccup unhappily stared up at the sky. Jack understood at once that Hiccup held himself responsible for what had happened here. He couldn't help but grin for a bit. _That is just so Hiccup. _

>"Yeah, you better stay away indeed" he replied. Now, Hiccup's shoulders tensed for a bit, too. Jack smirked.
"I mean, if you and Toothless would come with me, there'd probably wouldn't be any Pitch left for me, right?"

>Hiccup relaxed, and after a moment, he snickered.
"You bet. One shot from Toothless and there'll be nothing left but some grey mud."

>"Speaking of Toothless, could you maybe use that funky flute you have and call him? I mean, we're on an uninhabited island, and I can't exactly fly us backâ€¦"
"Yeah, we should head home." They both reluctantly got up.

The whistle had been one of Hiccup's latest ideas. Inspired by Fishlegs' sign language communication system for dragons, he had designed a whistle with a shrill, distinct sound that you could hear from miles away. It had been easy since then to call Toothless without ripping his throat apart.

>Hiccup walked towards the middle of the clearing, hoping it would increase the whistle's range. He reached in one of the pouches that hung from his belt.
Oh. Great. I mean, my day wasn't already happy enough, was it? "Uhm, Jack, have you seen my whistle? It's not in my pouch anymoreâ€¦"

>"You mean this?" Hiccup heard a loud whistle behind him. It was uncanny how Jack could manage to get a pleasant sound out of that thing.
"Yup, that's the one" Hiccup said, as he turned around.

And froze.

* * *

><p>Pitch had been watching from the shadows, barely able to contain his excitement. The 'show' that Jack had put up for him was in fact merely the prelude, though it had been entertaining for sure.
Al that was needed now was a little push, and soon the gears would turn by themselves. And with each turn, Jack would be trapped further between them, and each turn would crush a him a little bit more.

>As for the last little push, well, Jack seemed to be sufficiently relaxed and off-guard now. Pitch smiled darkly.<p>

* * *

><p>"What?" Jack asked, as he saw Hiccup's expression suddenly change into horror-mode.
"Behind you!" he screamed, and Jack wheeled around; instinctively his hands rose up as if he was still holding his staff.

>There was nothing.
"Um, Hic, there's nothing behind me" he said, turning around again to face Hiccup.

There was no one to answer him.

* * *

><p>Hiccup had been about to knock Jack upside the head for not believing him â€"with his sarcasm, don't get the wrong idea here- when something cold and sandy suddenly wrapped itself around his body and pulled him towards the shadows. He didn't even get the chance to properly scream his lungs out when something covered his mouth- not sand this time, but two real hands. Grayish, pale hands.
"Shhhh, boy, not a word now" Pitch whispered, clamping his hands more tightly around Hiccup's mouth, making sure that not even a whimper would escape from his lips. "Just pay attention to our dear Guardian. Trust me, you don't want to miss this."

>And since it was the only thing he could do, he watched how Jack freaked the fuck out.
"Hiccup? Hiccup!" Jack shouted, worry starting to show up on his face. "HICCUP! HIC! WHERE ARE YOU?" Behind him, Hiccup could hear Pitch chuckle in delight. He tried to wriggle himself free, but both the sand and Pitch' hands were far stronger than he was.

"Lost something important, Jack?" Hiccup's eyes widened as he heard Pitch' voice. They hadn't changed position â€"it seemed like they didn't need to; apparently they were somehow invisible in the shadows- but the voice seemed to come from all directions at once.

>Jack looked around, a murderous expression twisting his features. If he had had his staff, he would have looked very intimidating.
"PITCH! What did you- where is he?" he snarled, scanning the shadows around him.

>The laugh seemed to come from all directions again.
"Are you worried, Frost? Do you fear what might become of your precious friend now that you failed to protect him?"

>Jack raised a shaking fist, a string of undoubtedly unholy words ready in his mouth, when suddenly his shoulder slumped. He probably had realized that without his staff and with Pitch having both Hiccup and the ability to hide in the shadows, he didn't really stand a chance.

When he looked up again, the anger in his eyes had been replaced with devastated resignation.

>"Just- just leave him out of this!" Hiccup had never heard Jack sound this desperate. "This is between you and me, Pitch!" He threw up his empty hands. "I'm unarmed! You can do whatever you want!"
"Oh, but don't you worry, Jack, I already am" Pitch told him joyfully. "I am doing whatever I want- with your dear Hiccup, that is." Right at that moment, the hands disappeared from Hiccup's mouth. Before he had even noticed they were gone, he felt a sharp pain as something hit him, the whip of dark sand striking him mercilessly in the back. He cried out in pain, his scream cut off halfway as Pitch smothered him again. The scream echoed through the woods, seemingly coming from everywhere and nowhere at all. Jack let out an incomprehensive, enraged howl in return, looking around like a madman.

>"And that's only the beginning, Jack" Pitch told him merrily. "You've driven this boy into my arms, and I will not rest until he has been broken beyond repair; until there's nothing human left

inside him! And there's nothing you can do to save him!"

The last remaining bit of colour had faded from Jack's face.

>"No! " he stammered, staggering backwards as if someone had slapped him across the face. "No, no, NO!" he yelled, clutching his head, as if everything would somehow be alright again if he just shook it hard enough. "NO! NO!"

>Pitch laughed softly. He nudged Hiccup a bit. "This is the moment, Hiccup, watch closely."
Hiccup didn't look. He had stopped looking right after the whip had set his back on fire; not wanting to see Jack's expression- his voice, his words were already unbearable enough.

"NO! N-AAGH!" Hiccup's eyes shot open at the sudden cry of pain. Jack had fallen to his knees, clutching his chest- the exact same spot where Pitch had inflicted that wound from before. He kept screaming, and unlike the last time, the screams didn't grow softer as time passed by- the opposite, their volume increased and each scream was more pained and savage than the previous one.

Hiccup's mind went numb at the sight before him. He didn't even notice that Pitch had removed his hands and that his ties had disappeared. Only when he received a little push in the back, he moved; without looking back he ran towards the curled-up figure in the middle of the clearing.

>"Jack!" He pushed the shivering Spirit on his back, his unsteady hands wandering over his body, completely unsure of what to do, or how to remove the pain that he was in.
"H-Hic?" Jack slowly opened his eyes a little bit, squinting at the figure bending over him.

>"I'm here, it's ok, you'll be ok, just give me a minute" Hiccup muttered, searching for the source of Jack's sudden attack of pain. He softly disentangled Jack's fingers from his hoodie. The fabric had been completely crumpled, having been grasped tightly at the same spot multiples times now. Hiccup was relieved to see that there was no sign of a tear in it, or any blood, as he secretly had been fearing. However, it did confuse him; why had Jack been gripping it so tightly if there wasn't any wound there?<p>

"Dammit, Hic" Jack groaned in pain "I thought you- PITCH! WHERE?" he shot up; or that was what he about to do, but after the first few movements upwards he fell back again, hissing in pain. His eyes frantically searched their surroundings for the Boogeyman. Hiccup held him down as Jack attempted to get up again.

>"He's gone, Jack, it's gonna be ok now." Hiccup didn't have the slightest idea whether Pitch had really left or not, but Jack was in some serious need for white lies now.
"He's really gone, so just calm down now and tell me where it hurts."

>Jack groaned.
"Chest. Burns. Less than- before. Hell." He also said some other things, things that will not be repeated for the sake of this story's PG-rating.

>"There doesn't seem to be a wound" Hiccup said, puzzled.
"Well there is something!" was the cranky response. Hiccup was about to retort with something extremely witty and snarky, but he decided to save it for later. Medical matters came first.

>"Ok, just hang on, I'll look."<p>

Somehow, Hiccup was unreasonably nervous as he pulled up Jack's hoodie. He felt a small flutter in his stomach as he saw the subtly

toned muscles- that was probably jealousy, he told himself. Who wouldn't be jealous of those abs and that pearly white skin?
>"I really don't see anything-"
"Higher."
>"Still don't- What is that?" Hiccup squinted his eyes at the tiny spot, right in the middle of Jack's chest, at about the same height as his nipples. Not that Hiccup was looking at those, or something. Really.
Dammit, Hiccup, focus.

"What is it?" Jack tried to sound as normal as possible. This description might imply that he didn't feel, in fact, normal- and he didn't. But he would like to stress to the reader that Hiccup having nearly stripped his hoodie off didn't have anything to do with the abnormal feeling- he was just in a lot of pain, really.

Just so you know.

"There's this tiny black spot, right here-" A sudden pain shot through Jack's body and he cried out.
>"Sorry!" Hiccup squeaked, immediately drawing back his hand.
"Watch out-" Jack choked, trying to breath steadily again. He looked at the young Viking to see if he had that adorable I-screwed-up-again-but-I-didn't-mean-to-please-don't-freeze-my-tongue-to-my-drink-in-front-of-Astrid-like-last-time-expression on his face. He was disappointed to see that Hiccup instead looked very puzzled.
>"Weirdâ€|" he mumbled, looking at his hand.
Jack wondered what could be so damn weird that it distracted Hiccup from him being in pain. He looked up a bit, trying to see what was so curious about the hand.
>He never really got the time to see what it was, as something far more important drew his attention- and his horror.
Right behind Hiccup, Pitch bared his pointy teeth at him, his scythe held firmly in the ghostly white hands. Jack wanted to scream, but Pitch already lashed out, his blade moving with unforgiving swiftness towards Hiccup's unprotected neck-

NO!

The sudden return of all of his fear was of such an intensity that he barely registered the burning pain that simultaneously erupted from his chest.

>The immediately following black-out felt like an act of mercy.<p>

"Weirdâ€|" Hiccup studied the tiny bit of stuff that had clung to his fingers after he had withdrawn his hand from the weird black thingy on Jack's chest. Upon closer inspection, it turned out to be sand. Black sand.

>I have a very, very bad feeling about this.
_Hiccup wanted to share this alarming observation with Jack, but as he looked up from his hand, he directly forgot whatever he had wanted to say.

>Jack's eyes had shot open, staring into the distance as if he saw something terrifying. His mouth opened as if he was about to scream, and his back arched, his shoulder tensed and his hands convulsed, turning his fingers into claws. Before Hiccup could ask what was wrong, Jack's impossibly wide eyes rolled to the back of his head, and he fainted.
"Jack? Jack!" Hiccup anxiously shook the unconscious boy, but to no avail.

>"Jack! Wake up!" Great Odin's eye patch, just what is going ON here?

"Thor's Beard! Hiccup, you ok?"

>"Astrid?" Hiccup wondered surprised, as he recognized both the voice and the dragon that landed in front of them. The next moment, he was tackled by a black scaly blur.
"Whoa, Toothless, easy! I'm alright!" he hushed, as the dragon worriedly inspected his friend to see if there were any injuries. Within a moment, the clearing was filled with dragons and their respective riders.

>"He came to me, completely rabid, you should have seen it- he swam all the way from the island. Kept pushing me; I thought there was something wrong. I've never seen Toothless that worried." Astrid said, patting Stormfly after she got off.
"Yeah, and we have never seen _Astrid _that worried" Ruffnut added teasingly, ducking right in time to dodge Astrid's punch. Tuffnut wasn't as quick.

>"So you went to get help, huh, bud?" Hiccup wasn't surprised at all, actually. He knew that Toothless was far more intelligent than people often credited him for. For example, Jack once thought-
Crap. Jack.

>He quickly went back to the unconscious boy. Toothless hurried with him, sniffing to see why weird white human was asleep. When his nose grazed over the black spot, he suddenly crawled back and bared his teeth, growling angrily at it.<p>

"Is that Jack? What happened to him?" Astrid knelt next to Hiccup, and the others quickly formed a circle around him. They had only come to see Jack recently- it had taken Hiccup inhuman amounts of effort to convince them he wasn't going mad and seeing things that weren't there.

>Lucky thing that they had an ancient lore on Jokul Frosti; that made it a lot easier for them to understand and accept that another mythical being was hanging out with Hiccup. He seemed to attract those things.

>"And what is that?" Fishlegs pointed to the black mark. Did Hiccup's eyes deceive him, or was it bigger than before?<p>

"It was Pitch, we walked right into his trap, and he-" Hiccup realized it would take hours to properly explain what had happened, especially since none of them even knew who Pitch was in the first place. He sighed.

>"It's a long story, but Jack got attacked and now there's something seriously wrong with him."
Snotlout, with his ever-so-delicate tact, was about to ask what it was when Astrid pinched his ear, sensing that now wasn't the time for a satisfying explanation.

>"What are you going to do? I don't think anyone in the village can help him... They can't even see him." Truth was, they had been keeping Jack's presence a secret. Of course, Hiccup had tried to tell his father about Jack, but he had given up on that fairly quickly. It had been a rather one-sided conversation, so to speak.
Gobber had just laughed at him.

>"Yeah, is there, like, a Spirit Hospital or something?" Tuffnut asked.
"I don't know€| I highly doubt it." Hiccup said thoughtfully._

>Suddenly, he remembered their earlier conversation._

>

_ "So, what are you going to do now? Without your staff?"

>"I guess I'll go to North."

"Guys, I'm probably not going to be home for a while."
>"What? You figured something out?" Astrid asked.
"Yeah. I think I know where to go."
>"Where?" it sounded in unison.
"I'm taking Jack to the North Pole."

* * *

><p>Aaaaaand that's it for this chapter, folks! Stay tuned for the next ones so you might understand what the actual fuck is going on. I myself had some trouble with that as I wrote this fic. I fail at planning, big time.

The following words are ramblings of the so-called author and mostly consist of lame excuses and brainless ponderings and foreshadowing and superfluous background stuff. Read at own risk.

* * *

><p>* I KNOW IT'S THE LAMEST PUN EVER. I STILL REFUSE TO REGRET ANYTHING. ANYTHING, YOU HEAR ME.
I may or may not have written 3/4 of this chapter just so I could make that pun. I got my priorities damn straight.**

Next up will be the journey to the North Pole with an unconscious Jack and all the hassle (winkwink) that this provides. Oh, and some explanation as to what the fuck just transpired this chapter. I've tried to drop a few hints, subtly.

**Then again, my foreshadowing is about as subtle as a vodka-filled North with a megaphone, so you brilliant beings probably have figured out what is going here already. **

Goddamn intelligent fandoms *grumble*

On another note: **I only recently started watching **_Dragons - Riders of Berk_** and by the gods, do I love it. Hiccup's sass is an inspiration (and a drug) to me. It does, however, provide a problem: I can't help but love Astrid and Hiccup. Together. As a couple. Which kind of messes with my HiJack feels. Which kind of messes with my inspiration. **

**It's not like I believe that one ship automatically means the demise of another; I am somewhat capable of liking different ships with same characters. Hiccup just fits remarkably well with different kinds of characters, in my opinion. Astrid fits him, as does Jack, both in different ways. **

BUT IT STILL INTERFERES WITH THE HIJACK FEELS DANGIT.

That, and it makes me painfully conscious of my own FAIL at attempting to stay true to rule #1, _THOU SHALT NOT __NOT BRING SHAME UPON HICCUP'S HOLY SASS**. **_**Why did I ever think it was a good idea to write something with Hiccup in it TT^TT**

**And as a final note: YAY TORTURING JACK. I AM A DESPICABLE HUMAN BEING 8D
>

IT'S ONLY GONNA GET WORSE, YA KNOW. **MUCH WORSE.**** WITH

ANGST.**

**LOTS OF ANGSTING. YAY. **

**Oh and Bennefrost-shippers: you might want to stop reading this is, if you are fragile of heart. There will be an elaborate warning later on, but yeah. Be warned. Or something. **

3. Let's Call It A Curse

**Last time on _'Everything goes to shit and we don't even know how or why or what- the fanfic_': **

**Pitch, using Hiccup as a hostage, forced Jack to surrender his staff and then proceedd to do something kinda weird and slightly pervy with Hiccup's dagger and it somehow caused Jack to end up squirming in pain on the ground like a chopped-up worm.
>Then Pitch was gone and there was a (strictly literal) boy-on-boy-thingy. Also Hiccup is like whut cause there doesn't seem to be a wound so why is Jack being such a wussy idk.
And then Pitch was like 'whassup suckas I still b here' and Jack thinks that he is about to chop Hiccup's adorable smootchy-face off and he freaks out and faints and Pitch is like 'hehehe ok Pitch is OUT bitches'.

>Then Hiccup freaks out (honestly, this fic should be renamed '*Frostcup: The Freak-out*') because JACK WTF Y U NO WAKE UP DUDE and he decides to take him to the North Pole, which is the standard procedure for comatose Guardians. **

And so it continues.

(this is like my best summarization ever)

* * *

><p>"Come on, Toothless, it can't be that far now." At least I hope so. My fingers are freezing off.

They had been flying for hours. Jack had always told him to just follow that one star that was right next to the two tiny stars that were right under that really big star and he would eventually get to North's place. Berk wasn't really all that far away, he said. You could reach it in two nights, if you rested long enough during the day, he said.

"Just _wait_ till you _see_ it, Hic, it's got all these _yeti's_ and triangular_ elves_ and flying _toys_ and_ ice sculptures_ and the best hot chocolate_ ever_!" Hiccup muttered angrily, doing a fairly good impression of Jack's voice. He looked at the impersonated party, who still hadn't moved ever since he had lost consciousness.

There had been some technical problems at first- Jack couldn't hold onto anything as a normal passenger would. First, they had slumped him over Toothless' back in front of Hiccup, but the rough surface of Toothless' scales and the edges of the saddle were bound to cause skin damage due to friction, maybe even make the black spot worse if it came into contact with dragon scales.

>That, and it made Jack look as if he was dead.<p>

Then, they decided to prop him up in the normal position for passengers- behind Hiccup, with his arms around his waist. Of course, since Jack couldn't hold himself in place, they had to bind his hands together. It seemed a really good solution, but after a short test flight, the idea was abandoned- Jack kept falling sideways and nearly took Hiccup with him in a free fall once.

At last, they decided to employ what Astrid had dubbed 'the princess way': They propped him up before Hiccup, sidestraddle, while Hiccup held one of his arms around him to prevent him from falling backwards ('as if he were your lovely bride' 'Shut_ up_, Astrid').
>Despite Hiccup's reassurances that it was strictly for practical purposes and not romantic at all, it did look quite prince-on-a-big-white horse-and-his-princess-bride-to-be-in-front-of-him -riding-together-towards-their-happily-ever-after-ending-ish.<p>

Only, Hiccup wasn't a prince, they were riding a black dragon, Jack was most definitely NOT HIS BRIDE (or a princess), and they weren't exactly headed for a happy ending.

And though he had been laying still the entire journey, Hiccup found Sleeping Beauty (after about two hours of flying he had starting calling him that; and he'd like to stress that he meant it _ironically_) to be distracting.

Firstly, there was the issue of Jack's head. If Hiccup just had been a bit taller, they could've let it rest against his chest; but since Winterkid had a couple of inches on him, his head was resting on his shoulder instead. As a result, not only was Hiccup constantly tickled by whimsy, snow white hair, but Jack was also quite literally breathing down his neck- and by the roots of Yggdrasil, his breath was _cold_.

Secondly, Hiccup felt obligated to check on his passanger continuously. He kept twisting his neck, which had started to hurt by now, to see if Jack was still halfway nuzzled into the tree layers of fur around his neck, to see if the eyes with their white long lashes were still closed and his lips were still slightly parted, forming little o's with every breath.
>It wasn't weird to double-check when your friend seemed to be in some sort of coma, right? See, there's nothing strange about that. Just bros helping bros.
Anyway, his piloting skills weren't as impeccable as usual, and it frustrated Hiccup greatly.

The stars that had been their guide had started to vanish. Worse, Toothless had started to grow tired of the long flight with extra weight. Hiccup was used to the cold, and he had taken extra measures to ensure he and Toothless wouldn't freeze to death, but the icy winds were merciless. Whenever Jack had flown with them, the Winter Spirit would tone down the sharpness of their piercing gusts, and filter the tiny bits of ice from the air. They had gotten used to this luxury, and now that Jack was of no help at all, the flying had been even harder on both of them.

>"We need to get there before the sun has risen, Toothless" Hiccup urged him. "Without the stars, we cannot find North. And we can't stay and rest here." The last part was a bit superfluous; the barren fields of ice and the rugged mountains that lacked any form of shelter obviously weren't suitable for a stay longer than a few

minutes.
Although Hiccup didn't say it out loud, they both knew that there was another reason they had to hurry: they couldn't go back. If they turned around now, they wouldn't make it back to the shelter of the valleys before Toothless would collapse; they were too far gone now. They had to reach Father Christmas within a few hours, or they were in some pretty deep shit.

Jack meanwhile had started to snore- again. It was barely audible, but it still annoyed the hell out of Hiccup. Here he was, freezing his ass off with a minimum amount of sleep and provisions, getting minuscule icicles into his eyes, his nose permanently running and not the slightest bit of feeling left in his fingers and toes, and Jack just slept. Like a frickin baby that didn't have to do anything besides looking adorable so that everyone around him would work their wits away to satisfy his needs. Hiccup had to be vigilant at all times, while Jack could just rest peacefully.

Well, that wasn't exactly true.

* * *

><p>It had been their last stop, where they had tried to catch some z's before they had to fly the roughest part of their journey. It was during the day, so Hiccup had slept under Toothless' wing, to simulate a darkness that wasn't there. It was quite comfy, actually.
Then he had heard it. Jack's voice.

It had started with just some incoherent mumbles- soft, almost inaudible in fact, but it was definitely Jack's voice. Hiccup's heart made a little jump in relief, and he shot from under the wing and hurried towards Jack.

>"Jack? You awake?" he asked hopefully, shaking him a couple of times. Jack didn't react at all. His eyes didn't open and there was no cheeky grin cracking through. Hiccup's shoulder slumped in disappointment as he let him go.<p>

"Great. He talks in his sleep. That is just great." He shot an angry glance at Sleeping Beauty. When he did, his anger disappeared, to be replaced with worry. Thus far, Jack's sleeping face had been still, like that of a statue. Now it was twisted, with a deep frown Hiccup had never seen before. The mumbles had grown louder, and they sounded anxious. When Jack even started to tremble, Hiccup finally realized what was wrong.

>A nightmare.

This was bad. This was really, really bad, this was beyond I-seem-to-have-upset-Astrid-and-I-don't-know-how-and-she's-going-to-skin-me-alive-bad. Nightmares were Pitch' domain; Hiccup didn't doubt the possibility that the Boogeyman could manipulate whatever Jack was dreaming. He feared for his friend.

"Jack, wake up" he shook the Winter Spirit rather roughly, hoping that it would somehow work. "Come on, snap out of it! Wake up! WAKE UP!"

"Oh, I doubt shouting will wake him up."

>Hiccup shot upwards, trying to determine where the voice had come from. Pitch chuckled, but he didn't show himself, opting instead to create shadowy figures that crawled everywhere all of

sudden.
_

"Missed me, dragonboy?"

>"Oh, yeah, I've been dying to see you ever since you held that blade at my throat." Hiccup tried to sound nonchalant, with extra emphasis on the word 'tried'. Toothless rose up and roared angrily as Pitch' laugh resonated all around them.

>"What a cold reception! Frost must have such a bad influence on you."
"What did you do to him?" Hiccup spat, ceasing his attempts to spot the Boogeyman. Toothless had come closer and protectively laid his tail around the two boys.

>"Still haven't figured it out? I know that Jack never picked his company based on their intelligence, but dear me, you're slow."

Hiccup tried to think of a witty, biting response, but his sass failed him. Pitch seemed to notice.
"Cat got your tongue? Well, I suppose that you have had a bit of a rough dayâ€| I should know, I've been following you the entire time from the shadows. You leave a most exquisite trail of fear and worry, boy."

>Next to him, Jack's mumbles had become louder, though they were still incomprehensible.<p>

"I suppose I _could _give you some hints in return for you delicious anxiety. You surely remember the mark I left him?"

>"That black thingâ€|?" Hiccup said, realization slowly dawning on his face.
"Yes. Yes! The mark! Now _that _is what I call true

craftsmanship. I've worked for years on this technique, but reward will be worth it. See, when I pricked him with your knife â€"thanks for letting me borrow it, by the way, the blade has a lovely balance-I usedâ€| let's call it a 'curse' shall we?

>Of course, it is in fact much more refined and complicated and all-round nasty than just a curse, but it's the best description we have. A curse. A very, very special curse. It's activated by fear."

>"Activated by fearâ€|?" Hiccup muttered to himself, trying to understand what Pitch meant by that.
"Yes. The concept is fairly easy, even for you: victim is afraid, curse kicks in, causes unimaginable pain, violÃ . Of course, the greater the fear, the more painful it is."

And then it all made sense.

"You mean, back thenâ€|" he said, remembering the sudden shock on Jack's face before he lost consciousness.

>"Oh yes, that was fun. I just appeared right behind you and pretended to slice off your head. Got him real good. Fear really suits him, don't you agree?"

>"Then, the other times-"
"You mean when he was cowering in pain â€"pain suits him even more, now that you mention it- previously? Why yes, that was the curse, too. Every single time that he is afraid, he will suffer. Isn't it brilliant?"

>"It's sick!"
"Matter of perspective" was the off-hand reply. "Oh, and that's not all of it" Pitch sounded like an overexcited scientist that had found a way to cure cancer by now."There's another edge to this epitome of my brilliance. It doesn't _just_ hurt him. You see, every time the curse is activated-" Pitch suddenly halted mid-sentence. There was a short cackle. "Dear me, I almost spoiled all of my clever surprises! That would be such a waste of my brilliant planning. You'll have to figure out the details yourself, it'd be so much more fun that way." The shadows started to fade, but Pitch wasn't done yet.

>"Promise me that his suffering will be long, and painful, and that the Guardians will be there to see it. Oh, on the topic of Guardians: I'd like you to give them a little message from me when you get there."<p>

Hiccup was about to tell Pitch that he better fuck off if he didn't want a Night Fury to blow him and his stupid message to tiny sandy pieces, but Jack caught his attention again. The mumbling had reached the volume of a normal conversational voice, and between the incomprehensible groans and mutters there were some actual words. They didn't make any sense to Hiccup, but the way Jack said them alarmed him- in an almost pleading way that definitely didn't suit his voice. It was as if Jack was begging someone to - no, as if he was begging someone _not _to do something. The amount of '_No/Please/Don't's_' was unnerving to hear from someone as cocky as the Guardian of Fun. Pitch, meanwhile, went on with his message.

>"Tell them that this is merely the start. Tell them that this is my answer to their impertinence twelve years ago!"<p>

Right after that, Jack suddenly screamed. It was a wordless cry that made Hiccup's blood run cold- no one was meant to ever sound that desperate.

>"Jack!" He shook him once more, but Jack had suddenly gone quiet again. Pitch' last laugh echoed one more time, as the shadows disappeared.
It was suddenly eerily quiet again. So quiet, in fact, that Hiccup could catch the last whisper that escaped his lips before Jack went into his death-like state again.

"Jamieâ€|"

* * *

><p>"Toothless, watch out!" It had been their third narrow escape from crashing into a huge icicle so far. Toothless' focus was rapidly decreasing, and Hiccup had caught himself dozing off on more than one occasion. The fatigue was taking its toll on them; they couldn't fly for much longer. Hiccup had been reduced to a miserable, shivering fishbone and he had to make an unreasonable amount of effort just so his eyes wouldn't fall shut. He could no longer feel his fingers, toes or ears, despite the numerous layers of fur that covered them.<p>

Toothless' wingwork was sloppy and unbalanced, and he could barely fly straight, swaying along with wind gusts instead. Jack was still comatose.

>Team HiJackLess was in pretty bad shape.<p>

_'Please let it be there' _Hiccup prayed each time they flew over another snowy peak, but there would only be more peaks and more snow and another icy wind to freeze him a little bit more. _Please, I want to stop. I want to sleep. I want a fire. I want Jack waking up. I want to stop. _

>But instead of giving in further to these daydreams of comfort, he softly patted Toothless on the back.
"Come on, buddy, just a little more." Toothless answered with a weak and tired growl. They were both at their limits. The stars were barely visible; and if Hiccup squinted his eyes a bit more, he could see some orange-ish light in the distance.

>"Oh crap, the sun is rising" he muttered, trying to contain the

panic that was slowly taking over. They had run out of time. Soon the stars would disappear completely, and they'd get lost on the friggin North Pole forever.<p>

"This is it, Toothless. You, me and Sleeping Beauty, flying towards our doom that poetically enough lies in the great sunrise before us. We will freeze to death in the first few rays of sunshine of a beautiful bright polar morning" Hiccup sighed dramatically. Toothless was too tired to even roll his eyes.

_ 'I wonder what will happen to Jack if we die' _Hiccup as he stared once more into the orange lights that grew brighter and brighter.

>Orange lights? The sun was supposed to be a single light. Yet in the distance, he could see that there were multiple bright orange spots.

>Yup. I'm getting delirious. My brain must have begun to freeze, too. I'm seeing multiple suns.
It's actually kind of pretty.

—

Hiccup blinked a couple of times and pinched himself, but the lights were still in plural form.

>"Toothless, is it me or are there multiple suns over there?" Hiccup knew that Toothless had a much better eye sight than he had. "Over there buddy, the orange lights." The dragon had been letting his head hang until now, and looked up to see what had excited his friend so much.
And when Toothless followed the finger that was pointed at something in the distance, he understood.

"Whoa! Toothless! What's gotten into you, all of sudden?" Hiccup shouted surprised as the Night Fury suddenly bolted forwards, with a new energy that seemed to come out of nowhere. Toothless roared triumphantly, turning his head to give Hiccup an excited look. He nudged with his head towards the lights.

>Hiccup looked. "The suns? What about them.
Toothless rolled his eyes and nudged towards the lights once more. _Look, you blind wingless being, look!

>Hiccup looked more intensely. "They don't really look like suns, thoughâ€|" he muttered. His eyes narrowed further. "They don't look like suns at allâ€|" Suddenly, his eyes widened. "Wait, are you trying to tell meâ€|?"

Then he cried out in triumph as well.

"WE MADE IT!" If he had been able to jump up and down, he would have done so. The orange lights he had mistaken for suns (_Thor's sideburns, how could I have mistaken those for suns?_) turned out to be windows from a large building that was halfway hidden in a high, snowy mountain.

North's place. They had reached it at last.

"Come on, Toothless, only a tiny bit more now, bud!" Hiccup encouraged him. He looked at the sleeping Jack that was still snoring against his shoulder.

>"Don't worry, Jack" he said, tightening his grip around the Guardian, "North'll be able to help you out, I'm sure. Everything's gonna be ok now."<p>

He probably shouldn't have said that.

As soon as they were about 1500 meters away from the Christmas Palace, something dark shot from between two peaks and headed straight for the dragon and his riders.

Under normal circumstances, it would have been easy to dodge.

But since both dragon and pilot were at their very limits, caught completely off-guard and carrying extra weight, the hit was a critical one. Toothless was hit in the left flank and directly lost his balance, swaying from left to right, a mere wind's toy. All Hiccup could do was hang on to the saddle, and desperately trying to hold Jack within his hold. He prayed once more to every god he knew and, just to be sure, to the Guardians as well.

It didn't prevent them from crashing into a mountain.

Toothless cried in pain, but still managed to stay airborne- Night Furies are just that awesome.

>"You ok, buddy?"
Toothless roared affirmatively. Hiccup sighed in relief, wincing slightly- the blow had been somewhat harsher on him when he tried to shield Jack from the impact. They had been lucky that the mountain had been covered in snow.

>"What was that, just now?" he wondered. 'It was probably Pitch' work' it echoed in his head, but he tried to shake the uneasiness off. If there was one thing he had learnt by now, it was that he had to control his fear when the Boogeyman was around.

>And if he was around, they had to get to North's even faster.<p>

"Think you can make it to the palace?" he asked Toothless, noticing that their speed had been drastically reduced. The dragon made an affirmative noise again, but it significantly weaker than before.

>He's hurt. Hiccup really tried to hold back the panic that was rapidly spreading through his mind, making it hard to think straight. That, and the pain that had only gotten worse- his body hurt everywhere. That crash obviously had caused more damage than Toothless let on; their speed was at an all-time low now, and according to the dragon's heavy breathing, every flap of his wings cost more and more energy.

>"Come on, bud, we're almost there" Hiccup urged. We're so close. We can't go down now. We're so close. The vague orange lights had already turned to recognizable windows.

They were truly at their limits now. Toothless had started to slowly but steadily fly lower and lower, and it seemed like every wing-stroke was a battle in itself. Even the wind seemed to be working against them now, as if it was actively trying to blow Hiccup plus one off the dragon.

>'We're not gonna make it' Hiccup panicked, not bothering anymore to control his emotions. They were hurt, they were absolutely exhausted, they were cold to the bone- they were flying way too low now, too. They had already lost an unforgivable amount of altitude when they had crashed into the mountain. If they wanted to reach the palace, they had to make a steep climb; and Hiccup seriously doubted that Toothless had enough strength to make it.

Not that they had much of a choice.

* * *

><p>Pitch watched from the distance as the dragonboy steered his dragon into a nearly vertical position, towards the palace. He felt a bit conflicted; on the one hand, he'd love to see them crash, preferably with Jack being crushed under the oversized salamander. On the other hand, they had to reach North's in order for his plan to unfold properly. He needed North to get a good understanding of the dire situation his co-Guardian was in. It would be a bit infuriating if all of his patience would go unrewarded now.<p>

Oh, it had been bloody _agony_, following those three all the way to the North Pole. All the time, Jack Frost had been so temptingly defenseless, and Pitch had to _watch_ how his friends just carried him away, unaware of his presence. The boy had been so deliciously worried; and even the dragon seemed to care about the Guardian. In the beginning it took him all of his authority to keep his hungry Nightmares from attacking them.

>He perfectly understood, he himself had felt his hands twitch with eagerness when he talked to the so-called Viking again. 'I could just bring Jack to the North Pole myself' it had rung in his mind, watching the boy slowly giving in to his fear. _I could just cut myself some slack from all the hard work and feast on the human... I surely deserve it. _But he had managed to keep himself in check. The boy was necessary.

Pitch repeated it to himself as he watched how they fought to reach North's place. It didn't seem like they were going to make it; it was becoming clear that they were going to need some help to get there, despite all of Pitch' inner wishes to see their fall.

>Maybe the blast a few moments ago had been a bit too much. It was, of course, a good thing to injure Jack's friends as much as he could. It was necessaery that they arrived the the Christmas Palace in the worst shape possible.
But they to to arrive there in the first place, and from the looks of it, that wasn't going to happen now. He summoned a couple of Nightmares that would surely get them to the top._

>The boy is necessary. The boy must live.
Suddenly, however, a new idea sprung to his mind.

>The dragon, on the other hand...

A devilish smile showed shiny, pointy teeth. He waited until he was absolutely sure that they weren't going to make it to the top. His Nightmares whinnied impatiently, waiting for the command to lung at their prey.

"Oh no, my dears" Pitch said, petting the nearest one calmly, "that's not how we're going to do it. As soon as I give the sign, I want you to go to beloved Father Christmas and draw him out."

>Pitch readied the spear of black sand and aimed it at the dragon.<p>

* * *

><p>Oh gods, we're not gonna make it. Hiccup realized this as there were about halfway in their climb. Toothless was already using all of his strength, but he was rapidly losing ground to the ubiquitous force of gravity. Their ascend had come to all but a stop, and had turned in a struggle to get forward instead. A struggle, it

seemed, they were bound to lose.

>Toothless desperately flapped his wings, but no longer made any progress.
"It's no use, pal, we gotta land" Hiccup shouted. "We can't make it."

>They kept going upwards.
"Toothless, I said we gotta land!" The dragon grumbled defiantly and kept fighting his way up.

>Of all the times he decides to be a show-off.
_"Toothless, I know you're worried about Jack, but there's no way you'll be able to make it, pal."

>He was blatantly ignored.
"Toothless, I swear to Sif, I hate to do this" Hiccup muttered apologetically, and maybe just a bit angry as well. Then he kicked the stirrups and forcibly changed their direction, steering them into a sharp left.

And thus, he saved their collective asses.

A hint of irritation showed up on the Boogeyman's face when his attack was evaded. Not even the scared shrieks that followed after the spear crashed into the mountain made up for the disappointment.

>Figures. Everything was going too well for too long. _Not that it matters, though.

>He quickly recomposed another spear. It was a bit oversized for the job, if he had to be honest, but he kind of needed to take out his irritation on something. Well, more than his irritation, actually. Twelve years of powerlessness, for starters. Twelve years of humiliation. Twelve years of an ever-growing thirst for vengeance he was unable to satisfy. Twelve years of- well, twelve years of absolute _hell. _

>It had been way too long since he had felt powerful enough to take out something big. The attack on Berk had been thrilling, but it had been just that. An attack- no, a skirmish, and its sole purpose had been to lure Frost and the dragon boy into his grasp. And what had happened afterwards didn't even deserve to be called a 'skirmish'... No, he felt how his fingers itched to destroy something. Kill something. Something big, powerful and magnificent.<p>

A Night Fury should suffice for that.

Yes, the weapon he was now aiming at the beast was a bit of a one-hit-kill. Yes, he normally hated doing things that way; he preferred slow and painful defeats for his enemies. And yes, he was probably going overboard for a bit. But it wouldn't hurt his plans now, would it? After all, Jack had started to like the dragon, too. He'd probably be miserable when he would find out his lizard buddy had died. Yeah, he would be pretty sad-

>And with that last thought, reason finally overtook Pitch' blind bloodthirst and calmed his mind, that had slowly but steadily been falling apart with rage.
Jack, indeed, would be pretty sad if he would ever wake up to find the dragon dead.

>Pitch smiled to himself, and shrunk the spear down to a much smaller, much less dangerous size. I really should watch my temper. To think I'd almost kill the dragon...He adjusted his aim once more, changing it from the vital spot on the Fury's chest to a much less vulnerable spot.

>To think I'd kill it... without Jack being able to see it dying before his very own eyes.

Toothless cried out in pain as something sharp pierced his left wing. He flapped his wings, trying to somehow shake off the burning

sensation that the wound caused. They made an accidental somersault before spiraling downwards.

>"TOOTHLESS!" Hiccup screamed, trying to steer them out of their free fall. The dragon seemed to snap out of his panic, and together with his trusted rider, made an impossible awesome sweep over the ground before rising up once more.<p>

The Boogeyman watched how they headed for a cave that, conveniently, was _just out of his reach._

Pitch was getting _really _tired of this shit.

_Would it really be that bad if I got rid of that oversized pest?

>_Yes. Yes it would_. It would be so much sweeter to have Jack see what would happen to those he cared about. To see what would happened to them _because _he cared about them.

_Oh well. I'll have to settle for the less satisfying solution...

>

"Just hang in there, bud, we're almost there" Hiccup urged as they approached the mountain cave. "We made it, we can always try again later."

>Toothless was too exhausted to answer. The wound on his left wing was serious, but not of any substantial danger, Hiccup had concluded.
_We need to reach that cave, STAT. _Not only because Toothless was at his limit and could collapse at virtually any moment, but also because he had recognized the weapons that had been thrown at them- Pitch was still around. He could be anywhere right now, and he could be planning everything.

>Hiccup held Jack a bit closer -for protection-related reasons, obviously-. He would not relax until they were in that cave.
It was so close now-

So close, and yet so far, as it would turn out. Pitch smiled smugly as he followed the crashing black blur in the distance. The fake tail- it really had been just that easy. He really shouldn't let his anger get the best of him anymore; calm and collected planning were his forte, not blind rage.

>Note to self: work on anger management issues.

* * *

><p>"Toothless? Toothless! TOOTHLESS! **TOO**- oh, you're awake. Sorry, bud." Toothless let out a weak why-are-humans-always-so-noisy-huff. He had been _this _close to taking a well-deserved nap.

>"Are you ok?" Hiccup's voice drifted from somewhere on the left. Toothless was too tired to move over properly, so he lazily turned his head a few degrees instead to see how his friend was doing.
"RAWR!" _ONE-LEGS! ARE YOU OK?_

>"Easy, pal, easy" Hiccup soothed. Toothless failed to see why he should be 'easy' when he saw the red spots in the snow around the heap of scrambled limbs. It was getting harder to focus well; his vision was getting blurry. The heap of limbs started to move, and Hiccup's head popped up. There was a bit of blood trickling down his left temple.
"It's ok, look" the heap moved some more and Toothless was finally able to make out two seperate bodies that had

been so confusingly entangled before. "He's ok, Toothless, he isn't hurt." Hiccup released sleeping-human-that-used-to-fly from his rather firm grasp; it seemed like he had tried to protect him by hugging him. _Tch. Humans._

>"Rawr!" THAT IS NICE. BUT HOW ABOUT YOU?
__"Oh, I'll live. Now" Hiccup carefully crawled from under sleeping friend "let's take a look at those wounds." He hobbled over to Toothless, carefully examining the injured wing. "I don't think there's any permanent damage" he said relieved. Then a shadow passed over his face. "I wish I could say that about my masterpiece, though... I'll have to make it from scratch-ACK!" Hiccup winced, falling to one knee. Toothless made another worried noise, but didn't have the strength to reach out anymore.

>"Don't worry" Hiccup squeaked reassuringly, flashing a quick, unconvincing smile at him. "Bit dizzy, that's all. Could've been a lot worse, we made quite the smack, right, bud?"
Toothless didn't answer. The reason was that there were these fascinating black spots appearing in his vision, multiplying by the second. There was also this curious drumming in his ears, and whatever was heard through the drumming sounded like a distorted echo.

>"...less? TOO...! Don't... live... stay...ke! ...WAKE! TOO-"
Finally. Some peace.

* * *

><p>"TOOTHLESS! TOOTHLESS!"
_This can't be happening.

>"COME ON! WAKE UP!"

>This isn't happening.
_"Please... Not... not like this..."

>They can't do this to me.

>"Jack, please, wake up. I need you. Jack! JACK! WHY WON'T YOU JUST WAKE UP ALREADY! JACK! TOOTHLESS!"
_Don't do this to me.

>"SOMEBODY! SOMEBODY HELP! THEY'RE... They're..."

>Please. PLEASE!

Hiccup didn't know how much time passed as he desperately tried to bring his friends back to consciousness. It could have been hours, it could have been minutes. He had absolutely no idea just how long he had sat there, curled up against Toothless, one arm weakly petting the dragon, the other one pulling Jack close to him. He spent an unspecified amount of time in a curious, half-wake state that allowed him to ignore the biting, merciless cold and the throbbing of his wounds.

>He had closed his eyes. He felt strangely peaceful.<p>

Well, he did for some moments, at least.

Then, there was the sound of hoofs racing through the snow; the sounds of nervous whinneying.

>The sound of approaching Nightmares.
Gods. Why.

Hiccup absolutely didn't want to, but a last spark of survivor's instinct forced him to open his eyes.

>That really didn't make anything better. There was suddenly black sand, everywhere. Not just from the black horses, but also black sand that moved about shapelessly, forming and reforming itself constantly as it shot their way. The Nightmares galloped onward as well, coming from all directions at once.
They were cornered. They were royally screwed.

But like hell they were gonna take Toothless or Jack away from him.

>Reluctantly, Hiccup staggered unto his unsteady foot-and-prosthesis.
"Stay away!" he shouted at the creatures circling around them. He sounded desperate rather than dangerous, and his words were met with indifference.

>Hiccup drew his dagger from his sheath, knowing full well that a dagger was probably the least effective weapon right now. A Night Fury could've shot them all to pieces, a Winter Spirit would have been able to freeze them all at ease.
Had the situation been any less grave, Hiccup would undoubtedly have commented on the irony of having both right here, and still being defenseless as a newborn Gronkle.

Alas, the situation could be classified as very, very grave. Hiccup swung around with his dagger, trying to intimidate the -strangely passive-aggressive- enemies.

>"Yeah, that's right, you stay away" he shouted, waving the dagger some more, "don't let me channel my ancient Berserker Viking ancestor-Augh!" His beaten body did not agree with the sudden, aggressive movements he made. The world started to shift and stretch and shrink before his eyes, and Hiccup had to lean heavily on Toothless so he wouldn't fall down. The Nightmares seemed to sense his weakness.
They attacked.

Hiccup tried the best he could, lashing out at any kind of black shape that came too close to either of his friends. He had swung one of Jack's arms around his shoulders, holding the boy close to him with one arm so the Nightmares wouldn't be able to sneak around and attack the unprotected Guardian.

>It was much harder to properly defend Toothless, with his large body that was a much easier target for Pitch' underlings. Hiccup stumbled around him, trying to both evade the attacks aimed at himself and parry the ones aimed at the dragon, trying to keep Jack out of harm's way while doing so. He could no longer see clear, instead wildly slashing with his dagger at any dark shape that showed up, screaming madly.
"GO! AWAY! YOU! MON! STER!" he cried desperately with each blow that never seemed to truly connect. He didn't feel any pain, wasn't sure whether he had already been injured or not.

>Not that he cared.
_'Not them' _it echoed in his head as he tried to cleave through two indistinguishable shadows.

>'Not Toothless' his mind pleaded as he stepped between his dragon and an approaching figure.

>'Not Jack' an inner voice roared defiantly as he made a stabbing gesture towards, well, something.

And then, there had been the clamor. The sound that was even more terrifying than the vicious whinneying of the Nightmares. A deep roaring, like as if a horde of big, wild animals was approaching them.

>And that was just the case. In the distance, huge shapes showed up, unlike anything Hiccup had ever seen. He wasn't able to see any specific features; his vision was far too blurry by now to see anything clearly. But their sizes and their shouting told him all he needed to know.
He backed up, closer to Toothless, and repositioned Jack so that he was a bit more behind Hiccup.

>The beasts came closer, still bellowing their gibberish that sounded more like a real language than battle cries. Hiccup readied his dagger. He would have shouted some threatening yet hollow words at

them, had he not been so. Damn. Tired.
Instead, he waited. The Nightmares had disappeared as soon as the new monsters had shown. Hiccup concluded that these things were probably the level-two back-up, or something, coming to finish the job.

The monsters halted in front of him. They had the sun behind them, turning them in even more frightening silhouettes. They were still shouting gibberish at them, undoubtedly debating whether they should eat him raw or cook them first. One reached out towards them, his nonsensical grumbles sounding almost quizzical.

>"No you DON'T!" Hiccup lashed out with the dagger aggressively. Of course, he missed.
The others quickly started shouting again and approached as well, and Hiccup retreated for a moment. He waved his weapon at them.

>"You see this? You hurt them, and I'll run you through!" he yelled, refusing to acknowledge how desperate he sounded. "You understand? DON'T EVEN TOUCH THEM!"
The monsters recoiled for a moment, surprised. They seemed to look to each other, shrugging, debating in their nonsical language what to do.

>For a moment, Hiccup felt a spark of hope. Maybe he could bluff himself out of this.<p>

A new series of shouts quickly killed that spark, however. A commanding voice came from the distance. Just like his vision, his hearing capacities had steadily lost to his exhaustion, but he nonetheless could make out that this wasn't the same language the monsters had been speaking in.

>It would've made for a most interesting thought, this fact, if the monsters hadn't suddenly swooped in on them.<p>

Hiccup tried. He really tried. He fought with unparalleled vigor to keep the things away from Jack and Toothless. But there was just too many, and he was just too tired. After barely two strikes, his dagger was wrenched out of his grasp. His fighting hand was secured in an iron grip moments afterwards. He kept trying to break free, but the monster was far too strong.

>He started screaming as soon as he saw a group of them tried to lift Toothless up.
"NO! NO!" his struggles to reach the dragon were to no avail. That didn't mean he stopped trying though.

>"PLEASE! NOT TOOTHLESS! LET ME GO!" the world was now definitely going topsy-turvy on him. Black spots started to cloud his vision.
"DON'T HURT HIM! DON'T- NO! NO!" Hiccup completely lost it when he felt how something tried to pull Jack from his grasp. The iron grip had shifted from his wrist to his shulders, and Hiccup used this extra freedom of movement to wrap his other arm around his friend. He wasn't able to fight like this, but at least they wouldn't be seperated. Well, in a perfect world, maybe, they would indeed not have been seperated. But this was not a perfect world, and this world in fact monsters who were a match way too big for a puny fishbone.

>"YOU CAN'T TAKE HIM!" Hiccup pleaded, as he felt how he slowly but surely lost his grip on the Guardian, as a million times stronger arms dragged them apart.<p>

And then Jack and Toothless were both gone.

And Hiccup lost it.

Screeching their names, madly looking around, he punched and kicked everything that tried to approach him.

>I couldn't protect them. He took it all out the the monster thing that was still trying to hold him down, even resorting to scratching and headbutts now.
>Those headbutts may not not have been his greatest idea so far. After the first attempt, Hiccup saw really pretty silver stars swimming before his eyes.
_'That's it' _he instinctively knew, _'that's the limit'.
>_I'm sorry, Toothless, Jack...
>I'm sorry, Dad, Astrid, everyone back home...
I can't protect anyone._

* * *

><p>Yes, doctor, I believe I may be addicted to cliff hangers.

__The following words are ramblings of the so-called author and mostly consist of lame excuses and brainless ponderings and foreshadowing and superfluous background stuff. Read at own risk.__

* * *

><p>WELL. NOW I HAVE TWO WEAKNESSES. I can't write smut worth shit and I can't write action scenes worth shit. Why am I even doing this OTL
Anyway, sorry for the cliffhanger. However, I think most of you have already figured what exactly those monsters were, so... yeah. **

**Next chapter will contain more actual things happening instead of lengthy descriptions of short moments. There will be North, too, and thank Man in Moon almighty, we'll finally get Jack back.
>AND ANGST. I AM EVEN MORE ADDICTED TO ANGST THAN TO CLIFFHANGERS. I have the brightest writer's career in front of me XD

**And, in a few chapters, we'll meet Rapunzel and Eugene, and later Merida, too! WOOHOO PLOT ADVANCEMENT. Seriously. I can't wait until we get there, because I have planned to let so much shit go down from there on, you people don't even know hlf of my plans. Lots and lots of shit.
>AND ANGST. GEE GOLLY GOSH THAT'S SOMETHING NEW I AM SUCH AN INVENTIVE WRITER.

Also, since someone asked why I didn't write how they met: I have. In fact, I have actually written the whole meeting already, but there hasn't been a good occasion yet where I can put it. Maybe next chapter, maybe later.

**ALSO PRETTY IMPORTANT: Thank you, lovely people that reviewed. I suck at thank-you-speeches. Might have something to do with my addiction/aversion to drama. **

So... Yeah. **_Thanks_, I guess. I love you.
>But only sexually.
Let's not make things complicated.**

End
file.